

## How Can Christ Followers Honor Political Leaders? - Let's Go

Mark 12:13-17

11-28-21

**The question believers were asking about political leaders:**

Do we honor and pay taxes to those devoted to our destruction?

### I. Be Cautious When We Partner with Politicians to Accomplish God's Will.

**Mark 12:13** – “And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap Him in his talk.”

*“...I'm grateful for the opportunities God gave me to minister to people in high places; people in power have spiritual and personal needs like everyone else...But looking back I know I sometimes crossed the line, and I wouldn't do that now.” - Billy Graham*

### II. Beware of Flattering Words and Promises.

**Mark 12:14** – “And they came and said to him, ‘Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?’”

*Psalm 5:9* – “For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction...they flatter with their tongue.”

*Proverbs 26:28* – “A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin.”

### III. Watch Out for the Either-or Scenarios.

**Mark 12:14** – “... Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?”

*1 Peter 3:15* – “...in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”

### IV. Give to God and Rulers What God Says They Deserve.

**Mark 12:15-17** – “But, knowing their hypocrisy, He said to them, ‘Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.’ And they brought one. And He said to them, ‘Whose likeness and inscription is this?’ They said to him, ‘Caesar’s.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’ And they marveled at Him.”

### What are we to give our rulers in this world?

- **Honor**

1 Peter 2:17 – “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.”

- **Prayer**

1 Timothy 2:1-2 – “First of all, then, I urge that (we) offer prayers...and thanksgivings...for all people...kings and...those in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

- **Obedience**

Romans 13:1, 7 – “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God...Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.”

- **The Gospel**

1 Timothy 2:4 – “(God) desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

### What are we to give God?

- **Full Allegiance**

1 Corinthians 10:31 – “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

2 Corinthians 5:15 – “and He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised.”

Acts 4:19-20 (NIV) – “But Peter and John replied, ‘Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to Him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.’”

## Going Deeper This Week

1. On what points do you disagree with our government? How does your situation compare with the Jews under Roman rule?
2. What groups are there in our country that can't agree about much, but they agree to oppose Christianity?
3. What was the motive of those who asked Jesus this question? Have you encountered people who have this motive in their questions? How can you deal with them?
4. Did Jesus expect to change the mind of the Pharisees and Herodians with His answer? How do you think the crowd responded when Jesus delivered such a wise answer?
5. What is the difference between compliments and flattery? Would it be fair to say that flattery is a form of lying?
6. How can those who perform surveys bias the results by the way they formulate the questions? How can one person in a debate try to win a point by defining the nature of the question at hand?
7. How can Christians be encouraged when they hear someone deliver a well-crafted answer to a skeptic? Is the skeptic still responsible for his motives and his refusal to repent?
8. What is the legitimate purpose of human government? What are the responsibilities of citizens?
9. What are the responsibilities of humanity, made in the image of God?
10. Is there a danger in our country for citizens to worship the political leaders? The government? The country? How do you seek to balance patriotism with Christianity? Pray for our leaders and for us to follow God's will.